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IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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LESSON FOR JANUARY 25

PETER STANDS UP FOR TRUTH AND HONESTY.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 4:1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT—Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight.—Prov. 12:22.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL—Ex. 20:16; Prov. 12:1; matt. 5:1-24; Col. 4:7, 8; Epli. 4:1, 2, 25.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Telling the Truth.

JUNIOR TOPIC—Some Disciples and Lessons in Them.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—The Folly and Sinfulness of Lying.

In this lesson we are the new community now called "the church" (v. 11) vindicated. In the boldness of Peter and John we see that the break with Judaism has come—the authority of the Sanhedrin is repudiated with the determination on the part of the disciples to be led by the Holy Spirit. It is for this reason that the body now gets the name "church." Since the break has come it must be shown to be a holy body; it must have recognition as being sacred. The sanctity of the tabernacle is transferred to the new body, which is God's dwelling place (Eph. 2:19-22). The church itself as well as the people about did not know this until God's judgment burst forth.

I. Characteristics of the Primitive Church (4:31-35).

1. It was a praying church (v. 31). For every want and every need they betook themselves to God in prayer.

2. It was a Spirit-filled church (v. 31). A praying church is a Spirit-filled church. The Spirit is given in answer to prayer (Luke 11:13).

3. It was a church which had great boldness in preaching the Word of God (v. 31). The minister is a Spirit-filled church will not offer an apology for the Bible, but will fearlessly preach it.

4. It was a united church (v. 32). They were "of one heart and one soul."

5. It was a charitable and generous church (v. 32). As needs arose supplies were given from a common fund.

6. Its ministers had a powerful testimony (v. 33).

7. It was a church whose membership exhibited unbelievable charities (v. 34). For "great grace was upon them all."

II. The Sin of Ananias and Sapphira (vv. 1-11).

1. Its occasion (vv. 1, 2). This was their hypocritical imitation of the generous act of Barnabas (4:36, 37). Because of the peculiar distress of the early church when the open rupture was made with Judaism, the members for a time had a "community of goods." This was not universal nor permanent; some continued to own their own homes, as for example John Mark's mother, who used her home in which to entertain Christians. Ananias lent back a part of the money received for his land while pretending to have brought it all. His wife was a partner in it. They wanted the honor of generosity without paying its price.

2. The judgment (vv. 5-10). Ananias allowed satan to fill his heart and lied to the Holy Ghost in keeping back a part of the price of the land. It was money already acquired. They were not under obligation to sell their land, or having sold it, to bring any of the money and place it in the common fund. Peter declares that they were absolutely free to do as they pleased with it. Love of praise is causing many today to make the same sinful, fatal mistake. People are walking in the way of Ananias and Sapphira when they make a profession of religion for reverence, gain and pleasure; or as proselytes, circumcise themselves. Frequently men preach the sermons of Moody and Spurgeon without giving credit. Physical death was visited upon Ananias and Sapphira for their sins.

III. The Effect (vv. 11-17).

1. Great fear came upon the church and upon all who heard of these things (v. 11). Irreverence is an outstanding sin of the age. The church should be recognized as holy—the very dwelling place of the Most High God.

2. Multitudes of men and women were added to the Lord (v. 14). This caused the fame of Peter to be spread far and wide so that the people were anxious to come under his shadow. Were the holiness of the body of Christ recognized, there would be many coming for pardon and salvation.

3. The hypocrites did not dare to join (v. 13). It is interesting to note that this reflection of the holiness of the church did not deter one but hypocrites from joining it. Nothing unhallowed nor any unregenerate person has a place in the church. This applies to our offerings as well as to our person.

Daily Prayer.

Oh Lord, we thank thee that men turn to thee; the measure of their need is the measure of thy supply. Let thy spirit dwell in our spirits, and then it shall be well within and peaceful without. We pray thee to give us a full and firmer, and more continual and more vigorous and effectious confidence in thee. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Character Building.

Life is mainly an opportunity for character building and testing.

New Kind.

Little Frederick, five, was visiting their neighbor across the way and noticed Mrs. Smith with a new pair of eye-glasses. "Oh, mamma," he exclaimed on arriving home, "I went over to see Mrs. Smith and she wears looking glasses on her eyes."

WADOO SAYS FARM LOAN ACT HELPS FARMERS

Former Secretary of the Treasury Describes in Kansas City Conflow Law Operates.

PART OF NEW SOCIAL SYSTE

Sustains Constitutionality of Law Which Does to Agriculture What National Banks and Federal Reserve Act Did for Commerce and Industry.

POINTS FR[illegible] WADOO'S KANSAS CITY ADDRESS.

Successful farming is beside the greatest industry. Upon it depends every other industry. Its operations are the basis for operations and complete credit facilities in the purchase of city and industrial products were of comparatively modern[illegible]

Therefore, rural credits are a part of the financial system of the nation in the same sense that commercial credits are. Commerce is composed in the main of the exchange of the products of agriculture for other lines of products and [illegible]

Without rural credits there could not be ready credit and quick exchange of the products of agriculture for the products of other industries.